

January/Goals

The simple act of goal setting appears to have a significant influence on attitude and behavior for older adults. At all stages of life, we need to feel purpose and accomplishment – whether it's being able to walk to the refrigerator without a cane, having an art show with your own artwork, or learning a foreign language. By setting goals, individuals can create a real plan to put dreams into action.

Below are seven goals that can help your older adults boost their health.

1. Stay social. When older adults are isolated for too long it can start to impact their physical health. Involve yourself in regular social involvement. Clubs are an excellent choice as they meet regularly.
2. Go to the doctor. Annual check-ups are more important than ever.
3. Create a medication management system. Find and keep a foolproof medication management system to ensure they never miss a pill. Find one that works for you.
4. Learn to navigate the internet. This is a great way to connect with friends and family.
5. Get sleep. While the body is at rest, it restores, repairs, and prepares for the next day. Strive to get seven to eight hours of sleep every night. Turn off all screens 30 minutes before bedtime and try meditating for 10 minutes every night.
6. Exercise. Physical activity is crucial to long-term health. Start by walking three times a week, then add to the length of the walk and more time.
7. Stimulate the brain. Give your brain a workout, as well. Find a brain workout you enjoy, from reading to Sudoku to crossword puzzles to regular puzzles, turn it into a constant habit.

Here are a few tips about how to set goals that you will feel great about accomplishing.

- Break big goals into smaller ones. It won't feel so daunting, and you'll be able to celebrate success along the way.
- Reward yourself. If you want to start a walking program, and you love socializing with friends, make a walking date. Positive feedback is a reward in itself – share your accomplishments with loved ones or on social media.
- Check-in regularly to monitor your progress. You can ask a friend or family member to help cheer you on and ask how you are doing.
- Use visual reminders. Keep a photo of a vacation destination on the refrigerator if saving money to travel is your long-term goal. Or make a to-do list that you can cross things off of. Use check marks, smiley faces – whatever it takes to make yourself feel successful.
- Keep your ultimate goal in mind. If you are trying to make a change with no idea why you're doing it, chances are you won't succeed.